

Chrysothamnus nauseosus / Pseudoroegneria spicata Shrubland

COMMON NAME	Rubber Rabbitbrush / Bluebunch Wheatgrass Shrubland
SYNONYM	Common Rabbitbrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass Shrub Prairie
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Shrubland (III)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Evergreen shrubland (III.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Microphyllous evergreen shrubland (III.A.4)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (III.A.4.N)
FORMATION	Microphyllous evergreen shrubland (III.A.4.N.a)
ALLIANCE	CHRYSOETHAMNUS NAUSEOSUS SHRUBLAND ALLIANCE

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 3

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM

RANGE

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Chrysothamnus nauseosus is a common shrub on steep slopes along roadcuts; however, the majority of these sites are below the minimum mapping unit.

Globally

This Common Rabbitbrush shrubland type may occur across the northern Great Plains.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

This shrubland is uncommon in Theodore Roosevelt NP and is usually restricted to only a few slumped slopes in the South Unit. The largest stand occurs just below the Painted Canyon Visitors Center.

Globally

As described from the Dakotas, stands occur either on dry, steep slopes along roadcuts or in heavily grazed floodplains.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree	<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>
Shrub	<i>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</i> , <i>Prunus virginiana</i> , <i>Symphoricarpos occidentalis</i>
Herbaceous	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i> , <i>Agropyron trachycaulum</i> , <i>Melilotus officinalis</i>

Globally

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Shrub	<i>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</i>

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Chrysothamnus nauseosus

Globally

Chrysothamnus nauseosus, *Pseudoroegneria spicata*

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Chrysothamnus nauseosus is the dominant shrub with *Prunus virginiana*, *Symphoricarpos occidentalis*, and *Juniperus scopulorum* as the usual secondary woody species. Shrub density is generally low and height range from 0.5 to 1 m. Herbaceous cover may be quite high on slumped areas. In contrast, herbaceous cover in stands along roadsides tends to be fairly sparse. *Pascopyrum smithii* is usually the major contributor to the herbaceous layer.

In the Dakotas, the vegetation has an open structure, with clumps of shrubs around 0.5 to 1 m tall scattered over a medium-tall herbaceous layer. *Chrysothamnus nauseosus* is the dominant shrub. Other less common shrubs include *Prunus virginiana* and *Symphoricarpos occidentalis*. The herbaceous layer may contain the graminoids *Elymus trachycaulus* ssp. *trachycaulus* and *Pascopyrum smithii*. Forbs include *Melilotus officinalis*. Stands may contain a variety of other weedy species, such as *Bromus japonicus* and *Bromus tectorum* (Von Loh et al. 1999). Further west, in Montana, the type may occur in entirely natural habitats, and

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the dominant graminoid is *Pseudoroegneria spicata*.

CONSERVATION RANK G3Q. Type may be weedy (semi-natural) as well as natural, making ranking difficult.

DATABASE CODE CEGL001330

SIMILAR ASSOCIATIONS

COMMENTS

Chrysothamnus nauseosus increases in abundance in heavily grazed floodplain stands of cottonwood (Thilenius *et al.* 1995). Stands in Montana contain *Pseudoroegneria spicata*. It's possible that the weedy stands in South Dakota should not be assigned.

REFERENCES

Lesica, P. and R.L. DeVelice. 1992. Plant communities of the Pryor Mountains. Preliminary Report prepared by the Montana Natural Heritage Program, Helena, MT.

Thilenius, J. F., G. R. Brown, and A. L. Medina. 1995. Vegetation on semi-arid rangelands, Cheyenne River Basin, Wyoming. General Technical Report RM-GTR-263. USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Fort Collins, CO. 60 pp.